



**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATION
ERECTION OF SINGLE STOREY AND FIRST FLOOR FRONT AND
REAR EXTENSIONS. CONVERSION OF ROOF TO CROWN TO
INCLUDE 2 REAR DORMERS AND 7 ROOF LIGHTS. ALTERATIONS
TO FENESTRATION
66 THE DRIVE, ICKENHAM, UXBRIDGE UB10 8AQ**

PLANNING STATEMENT, MAY 2022

Introduction

1. This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a householder application for part single and part two storey front and rear extensions and roof alterations at 66 The Drive, Ickenham, Hillingdon UB10 1AQ. The application is submitted on behalf of Mr J Valand, the landowner.
2. The application is a resubmission of revised proposals following the refusal of a previous application 4011/APP/2022/313 by a Decision Notice dated 31 March 2022. The Council objected that the proposed design, in particular, the two storey gable end forward projection and front porch with balcony above, and associated roof alterations and fenestration changes would be harmful to the character, appearance and visual amenities of the street scene and surrounding area.
3. The current application incorporates changes to address the Council's reasons for refusal. These changes are more fully described in this Statement which demonstrates how the revised proposals comply with national and local plan policies.

4. A householder appeal has been submitted against the Council's decision to refuse the previous application. However, this revised application is being submitted to enable the Council to grant planning permission at the local level so that hopefully the need to progress the appeal can be avoided.

Planning history

5. The Delegated Report to the previous application 4011/APP/2022/313 (DR), para. 1.3, sets out the relevant planning history for the property. Of particular relevance to the determination of the current application is planning permission 4011/APP/2013/1706 for a part two storey, part first floor front extension, 2 x single storey front extensions, first floor rear extension and raising of the roof to allow for conversion of roof space to habitable use to include 3 x rear dormers and 2 x front dormers involving alterations to elevations. This was granted on appeal by the Decision Letter of Michael Boniface MSc MRTPI, Inspector, dated 23 December 2013. This is highly relevant given that the main Local Plan Part 1 Policy BE1 remains an adopted policy today. I am also conscious that many of the larger house extensions and replacement houses in the immediate vicinity post-date this previous appeal decision so that the surrounding character and context to the application site as it is now (compared to 2013) provides even more justification for the scale and nature of the current proposals.

National policy

6. NPPF para. 130 states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping and are sympathetic to local character and history including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change and optimising the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount of development.

Development plan policies

7. The development plan for the purposes of S70(2) of the TCPA 1990 and S38(6) of the PCPA 2004 is the London Plan – The Spatial Development Strategy for London March 2021, the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 Strategic Policies (November 2012) and the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 Development Management Policies (2020).
8. The main Local Plan policies relevant to the application are:

BE1 – Built environment

DMHB11 – Design of new development

DMHB12 – Streets and public realm

DMHD1 – Alterations and extensions to residential dwellings

Planning Assessment

9. The Council's policies seek to ensure that all new development complements and where possible improves the character and appearance of the area in which it is proposed. Policy DMHB11 requires all development to be designed to the highest standards and incorporate principles of good design and harmonise with the local context by taking into account the surrounding scale of development and considering the height, mass and bulk of adjacent structures, building lines and set-backs and protecting features of positive value. Policy DMHB12 requires developments to improve legibility and ensure public realm design takes account of the established townscape character and quality of the surrounding area. Policy DMHD1 seeks to ensure that alterations and extensions to dwellings do not result in an adverse cumulative impact on the character, appearance or quality of the existing street or wider area.

10. I consider the proposals would not have any detrimental effect on the character, appearance and visual amenity of the street scene and the surrounding area for the following reasons:

- (1) The DR acknowledges that the site lies within a 'Developed Area' as identified on the Hillingdon Proposals Map. It does not lie within a conservation area or other identified Area of Special Local Character which is afforded additional protection.
- (2) The existing dwelling is not statutorily listed or locally listed and is of limited architectural merit and has no special character or particular features of positive value worthy of protection.
- (3) The previous Inspector (DL4) concluded that the existing house differs from the surrounding properties and is within a street of some significant variation in style and design such that, in this context, there is scope for extending and altering the property so as to improve its appearance even where this would not reflect the existing design and appearance of the building. The Inspector considered the previous appeal proposals would create a new form and character for the building which can just as easily be accommodated by the area in line with Policy BE1 (my emphasis) This remains an adopted policy today. He further commented that whilst the development would not harmonise with the scale, form, architectural composition and proportions of the existing building, this is not necessary in this instance as the design seeks a fundamental remodelling of the building to create a new character and appearance.
- (4) The DR to the previous application acknowledges that the street scene is characterised by a mix of detached houses of varying designs and styles. I concur with this description. The site is located in an area which has a variety of styles and where there is no uniform character or predominant house designs. There have been many applications in recent years to

extend and replace original properties with larger and taller houses. These usually incorporate dormer windows to both front and rear elevations and crown roof elements. The previous Inspector (DL6) commented that during his visit he viewed the adjacent property, 64 The Drive, which had undergone significant extensions and alterations in a style not dissimilar to the then appeal proposals, and in my similar to the current proposals. I have submitted with the current application a series of aerial photographs (the latest available photos date from around 2018 and do not show all of the more recent developments) and street level photographs of some of the more prominent and recent new houses. These provide a clear indication of the nature of the area as a relatively affluent private street with regular upgrading and enlarging of properties to meet the needs of residents.

- (5) I consider the revised proposals would be appropriate and in keeping when assessed within this constantly changing context. They would undoubtably alter the appearance of the existing house but, as with the previous Inspector, I consider they would represent a better quality and more cohesive design which would enhance the property and its contribution to the street scene and therefore I also conclude the proposal can easily be accommodated by the area in accordance with Policy BE1. The dwelling would be set back from the road more than 12 metres. There would be no change to the separation gaps between properties. The additions do not extend beyond the existing side elevations.
- (6) The revised proposals incorporate the following changes:
 - The scale and bulk of the central gable on the front elevation has been reduced. The width of the gable projection has been reduced from 7.6m to 5m. The height of the gable projection has been reduced from about 9m (the same height as the main ridge)

down to about 7.4m. These reductions would ensure the gable projection would remain subservient to the original building. Front gable projections are found on many other properties in the neighbourhood. Examples include Nos 64, 55, 34 and 23 The Drive which are provided in the photographs accompanying the application. In my opinion the reduced front gable projection would not be incongruous to the character of the area.

- The large feature window at the top of the gable has been removed. The Council raised concerns with the previous scheme that it would have resulted in an appearance of a three-storey house. The removal of the large feature window, together with the reduced scale and massing of the front gable, would ensure the proposal has the appearance of a traditional two-storey building with limited accommodation set within the roof. This is similar to all the other recent replacement houses in the immediate vicinity included in the photographs (the single exception is Nos. 48) which have additional accommodation in the roof.
- Removal of porch and balcony. The removal of the porch and balcony from the previous scheme further simplifies the appearance of the front elevation and addresses a specific concern previously raised by the Council.
- Repositioning of the gable projection. The reduced gable projection has been slightly offset to the left of centre of the building to avoid creating a dominant overly symmetrical appearance to the building.
- Reduction in roof pitch and consequent reduction in width and depth of the crown roof. The pitch of the roof has been reduced

from 40° to 33°. As a consequence the length of the ridge has been reduced from 8m to 6m and the depth of the roof has been reduced from 4.2m to 2m. Overall, the area of crown roof would therefore reduce from 136m² to 47m² or a reduction of nearly two-thirds (65.4%). The reduced form of crown roof in these revised proposals would not be incongruous or out of keeping with the surrounding area. Crown roofs are a common characteristic of other large houses along this section of The Drive. From the aerial photographs of the area (and taking into account some more recent replacement houses not shown on these photographs) some 19 out of 49 houses (about 40%) along this section of the street have crown roofs. The reduced scale of the crown roof would not be incongruous or out of keeping with the surrounding area.

- Reduction and simplification of fenestration on rear elevation.
The large and full-length window openings on the rear elevation of the previous scheme have been replaced with smaller windows which match the scale and proportion of other window openings in the building.

Conclusion

11. The revised proposals address the Council's concerns to the previous application by making significant reductions to the scale and massing of the front gable projection, simplifying it by removing the balcony and front porch, and reducing the size of the crown roof. These changes would ensure that the general form and proportions of the house are retained. To the extent that the design and styling of the elevations would change, I agree with the previous Inspector that the existing house has limited architectural merit and that it differs from the surrounding properties in a street which has some significant variation in style and design. The appearance of the house will change but I do not

consider this would be harmful to the character of the street scene and the wider area such as to justify refusal of planning permission given the variations in designs and styles and noting that this is not a conservation area or area of special local character to be afforded additional protection. In my opinion, the altered house would provide a good quality design which would better harmonise the design of the property and would incorporate architectural features which are commonly found on other altered and new houses in this section of the street and which would enhance the street scene.

12. For the above reasons I conclude the proposals would not result in unacceptable harm to the character of the street scene and the wider area and therefore it complies with policies BE1, DMHB11, DMHB12 and DMHD1.

Paul Dickinson
BA (Hons) MRTPI MRICS MCMI
5 May 2022